

The Pacific Temper of the Priesthood.

S E R M O N

ON THE

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FEBRUARY 25, 1795;

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First Book of Kings, Chap. xxii.

Ver. 11 and 12.

And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, made him horns of iron : and he said, " Thus saith the Lord, with these " shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them." And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, " Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver it into the king's hand."

AMID those causes which impelled the infatuated Ahab to rush headlong on his ruin, we may place the flatteries and sanguinary disposition of those on whom he relied with too implicit a confidence, as by no means the least effective. Threatened by the voice of Elijah with utter destruction both to himself and his whole posterity, on account of his having murdered Naboth at the instigation of his wife Jezebel, we find that wick-

ed and idolatrous king rending his clothes, putting on sackcloth, and fasting. That his penitence had somewhat sincere in it, and was not merely confined to external demonstrations of sorrow, we have every reason to infer from its meeting with such an acceptance from the great searcher of all hearts, that God announced to the prophet his merciful intention of suspending, for a time, the heavy sentence he had pronounced, on account of Ahab's having humbled himself. The sacred historian immediately proceeds to inform us, at the commencement of the chapter whence I have selected my text, that a cessation of three years from the war took place between Syria and Israel.

But transient, alas ! were the good resolutions of a man who had addicted himself to follow idols, and whose hands were stained with innocent blood, insomuch, that he is characterized as having sold himself to work wickedness.

wickedness. His propensity to go forth to battle soon operated upon him with redoubled violence, on finding an ally suited to his purpose in Jehosaphet king of Judah, who replied to his overtures of uniting their forces in making an attack upon Ramoth-Gilead, in the following memorable words: "I am
 "as thou art, my people as thy people, my
 "horses as thy horses." In so little estimation were the lives of subjects then held, that their sovereign made not the smallest scruple of sacrificing them in a quarrel with which he originally had no concern: but let it, at the same time, be remembered, that he shared with them in every danger, that he exposed his own person with the utmost indifference, putting on royal attire, and standing a conspicuous mark in the front of the battle.

Loud and zealous acclamations from those of whom he enquired concerning the will of Heaven, completed Ahab's delusion. We

read that he gathered together 'about four hundred prophets, and said to them, " Shall " I go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or " shall I forbear ?" and they answered, " Go " up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the " hand of the king."

Having thus shortly explained the passage which I make choice of for this day's discourse, I shall proceed, in the first place, to make a few observations on what has too often been the conduct of priests both before the propagation of Christianity, and afterwards, in the dark ages, as they are frequently termed; secondly, to mark out what ought to be, and no doubt is, the conduct of most ecclesiastics in the present age; and lastly, to draw some practical inferences from this day's solemnity.

Among all civilized nations, from the earliest records, there has been some distinct order

order of men set apart for officiating in divine worship, like the whole tribe of Levi among the Jews; we accordingly find that when Moses took a distinct account in the wilderness of Sinai, of all those who were able to go forth to war, that tribe was expressly forbidden to be numbered; their charge being intirely confined to the watching over the tabernacle. If preposterous ideas of obtaining glory by the slaughter of thousands operated first on the mighty hunter Nimrod, on the Anakims, who fancied their strength so great that none could stand before them, or on the Goliaths of Gath, trained up to war from their earliest years; such errors, though extremely pernicious, may in these instances be considered as somewhat characteristic. Among the worshippers of Baal, who, on finding their deity regardless of their invocations, fancied he was pursuing, or on a journey, and after repeatedly crying out to him with the loudest shrieks, in order to at-

tract his attention, “ cut themselves with
 “ knives and lancets till the blood gushed
 “ out upon them ;” no wonder if we find the
 most sanguinary dispositions predominate ;
 but the priests of the living God, even
 under the Judaical dispensation, imbibed far
 better lessons. In the predicted downfall of
 Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Isaiah
 throughout his fourteenth chapter, which
 has been universally admired as containing
 the most sublime imagery, sets forth in glow-
 ing colours the wickedness and folly of distin-
 guished conquerors : I might quote the whole,
 but shall here only produce the following
 short extract : “ The Lord hath broken the
 “ staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the
 “ rulers. He who smote the people in
 “ wrath with a continual stroke ; he that
 “ ruled the nations in anger is persecuted,
 “ and none hindereth. How art thou cut
 “ down to the ground, which didst weaken
 “ the nations !”

Nothing

Nothing that bears relation to the history of David, whose character as a prophet is equally conspicuous with that which he obtained by his martial achievements, will, I am persuaded, appear to you an unnecessary deviation from my subject. Among those praises of the Creator of the Universe, which occur in the writings of the psalmist, who was himself a successful warrior, we find none more frequent than the grateful mention of almighty power being exerted in putting a stop to carnage : “ He maketh wars to cease unto the
 “ end of the earth : He breaketh the bow,
 “ and cutteth the spear in sunder ; he burneth
 “ the chariot in the fire.” A strong sense of religion taught the royal seer, and he well knew how to apply the salutary maxim to the case of those with whom he was at variance, that overweening presumption is always in a state of the most imminent danger ; that whenever “ the nations furiously rage
 “ together, and the people imagine a vain

“ thing ;” whenever “ the kings of the earth
 “ stand up, and the rulers take counsel to-
 “ gether ;” devising schemes of inordinate
 ambition, “ he that dwelleth in heaven shall
 “ laugh them to scorn, and break them in
 “ pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

A variety of good actions, which the fa-
 ther, too often, only meditated, the son, we
 find, practised. The temple which David
 had vowed unto the Lord his God, but was
 expressly prohibited even from laying the
 foundation of, on account of the abundant
 blood which he had shed upon the earth, was
 erected with purer hands by Solomon, of
 whom it is recorded, among the instances of
 his superior wisdom, that “ he had peace
 “ on all sides round about him, and Judah
 “ and Israel dwelt safely every man under
 “ his own vine, and under his fig-tree, from
 “ Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of
 “ Solomon.”

But

But sound understanding is rarely to be found in the catalogue of those hereditary treasures which monarchs transmit to their successors. No sooner had Rehoboam ascended the throne, than, by the advice of young men, he told the deputies of the congregation, that " his little finger should be " thicker than his father's loins, and that he would chastise them with scorpions." A very considerable part of his dominions was hereupon irretrievably rent away from him; nor can there be any room for doubting that he abundantly fulfilled these haughty assurances towards those who yet remained in subjection to him, by making the young advisers his standing council. One of his earliest exploits was the building fifteen exceeding strong cities for defence, which seems to have been merely a prelude to his entering into hostilities, in the fifth year of his reign, with Shishak, king of Egypt; and it is sufficiently notorious from the united experience
of

of all ages, that it is the invariable tendency of war, while it aggrandizes and enriches a few, to heap abundant sufferings on the bulk of the people.

When Christianity succeeded to the law delivered by Moses, the doctrine of universal charity and brotherhood was, with great energy, inculcated by our Saviour and his apostles. The precept delivered in the Levitical institution, "Thou shalt not avenge
"nor bear any grudge against the children of
"thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," admits of a very circumscribed definition; we accordingly find it so construed by the Jewish doctors, as to take in only those of their own nation, till the great founder of our religion taught us a far better interpretation, and illustrated it by his excellent parable of the good Samaritan, which teaches us to consider the whole human species as nearly allied to each other,
being

being all children of one common father. We must be more captious than the lawyer there spoken of, who asked, "who is my neighbour," and more bent upon justifying our own little narrow local prejudices, if, after reading the whole of the context, we can entertain any farther doubt upon the subject.

"Wisdom from above," is defined by St. James, to be "peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated:" his account of the origin of war immediately follows; he attributes it solely to the lusts, and evil propensities of mankind.

During the primitive times, the followers of a crucified Saviour, tried, like gold in the furnace, by repeated persecutions, and favoured by few mighty, or learned men of this world, recommended their doctrines to a number of proselytes by the meekness and purity of their lives, and though unprotected

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ed by earthly potentates were still gaining ground. The conversion of Constantine caused a stupendous influx of riches from various quarters to pour down upon the church; at the same time giving establishment to what is usually denominated the Hierarchy, or assumed authority of ecclesiastics over the consciences of men, accompanied with an undue share of temporal rank and power: a long period of time, which has emphatically been called the dark ages, followed soon after, in the midst of which that direful portent the papal supremacy, considered by our ablest writers as that mystic Babylon, shadowed out to us in the Apocalypse, gradually erected its authority over the discomfited witnesses of the truth, who lay prostrate beneath its feet.

Wars, of all others, the most detestable, those which assumed to themselves the title of religious, at length broke forth. The most active instrument in stirring up the
princes

princes of Europe to undertake the preposterous enterprize of rescuing Jerusalem from the Saracens, was a fanatic, known by the name of Peter the Hermit. How that war terminated, after deluging the earth with blood for a long series of years, it would be superfluous to recount: its effects were durable in the actions as well as the sufferings of its votaries. Priests, in those ages, forgetting their Bible, together with all the lessons which it includes, took up the helmet and the spear; they utterly disgraced themselves, and prostituted their sacred function: for they were not only employed in the idle superstition of consecrating banners, and thundering down martial admonitions from their pulpits, but mingled in the thickest fray. The annals of various nations record their prowess: nor can we forget the severe reproof which one of the popes received, when, on his sending to intercede for the liberty of a captive bishop, the coat of mail, which had
been

been stripped from the military prelate's shoulders, was brought to him by order of the victorious chief, with the following pointed interrogatory: " Whether he recognized this as the coat of his son Joseph?"

Let us, in the second place, take a view of Christianity as restored in a certain degree to its original purity, by the light of the reformation dispelling many of those dark clouds which had overshadowed it. After the corruptions of the Romish church became so notorious as to threaten the extinction of all morality, as well as religion, there arose a set of men, who, under every discouragement the world could give to so arduous an undertaking, laboured to recal the attention of their hearers to the plain doctrines of the gospel. Bonds, cruel mockings, and even death itself, accompanied with tortures, awaited many of them: yet they
still

still persevered with unshaken firmness. The invention of printing, about that period, contributed to diffuse literature more widely, and operated as an adventitious mean of making their opinions more generally known. Nor is the effect of their pious exertions yet wholly obliterated. Even those who still adhere to the papal superstition, have by degrees lost something of their former ignorance. Amidst the depravity of these later ages, while the faith of many, from abundance of co-operating causes, waxes cold, some regard to propriety of character, and external decency, is still kept up. We no longer meet with any instances of ecclesiastics exhibiting themselves in the ranks of battle; but are told that there have been some instances upon record, and it is devoutly to be wished they may hereafter become more frequent, of dignified churchmen acquitting themselves with much credit in forwarding negotiations for peace, even without any
view

view to their own temporal emolument. "All
 " holy Scriptures," are well defined by St.
 Paul in his Epistle to Timothy, to be "pro-
 " fitable for doctrine, for reproof, for cor-
 " rection, for instruction in righteousness:"
 though wrested by some to the most baneful
 purposes, there is no evil propensity in our
 corrupt nature which they are not calculated
 to amend. Their still small voice operated
 equally on the devout Ethiopian eunuch, en-
 trusted by Candace with all her treasures,
 and on the persecutor who set out for Da-
 mascus, breathing out threatenings and
 slaughter. The same passage often holds
 forth an abundant variety of wholesome ad-
 monitions. Our great Teacher addressing
 the multitudes who followed him on a sab-
 bath-day from the house of one of the chief
 Pharisees, at the same time that he warned
 them against placing any confidence in those
 sudden enthusiastic flights of devotion, which
 urge men rashly to undertake what they have
 not

not sufficient abilities or resolution to accomplish; illustrates the salutary caution by two similitudes level to all capacities, and too important for me to omit citing them here at full length. “ For which of you,
 “ intending to build a tower, sitteth not
 “ down first, and counteth the cost, whether
 “ he have sufficient to finish it? lest, haply,
 “ after he hath laid the foundation, and is
 “ not able to finish it, all that behold it
 “ begin to mock him, saying, This man
 “ began to build, and was not able to finish.
 “ Or what king, going to make war against
 “ another king, sitteth not down first, and
 “ consulteth whether he be able with ten
 “ thousand to meet him that cometh against
 “ him with twenty thousand? or else, while
 “ the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth
 “ an embassage, and desireth conditions of
 “ peace.”

Two of the greatest springs whence human

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actions may generally be traced, are either ambition or avarice. There is no intelligent being in so poor and abject a state as to have his bosom totally insensible of the former emotion: and if we estimate the character of distant ages, by that of the period in which we live, we shall be convinced, that those who are so opulent, that, like the rich man in the gospel, they want room where to bestow their fruits, have very seldom been untainted by a love of money, impelling them even to the meanest actions. The lesson before us suits every gradation of rank, and is equally applicable to the palace or the cottage. Whether we erect castles, and send forth armies to the field, or have only a slender pittance, and our own bodily strength to rely upon, we are equally culpable in indulging such vain expenditure as we cannot long have means to support; or in being hurried on, by any wild paroxysms of revenge, to attack those who are too strong
for

for us. Whether we act solely from our own erroneous opinions, or suffer ourselves to be guided by the advice of those who artfully practice upon our credulity, till they have warped our better judgment to the sinister purposes of their own ostentation or malevolence; all our haughty projects must invariably terminate in disappointment, shame, and ruin.

If, in the days of Noah, men, deaf to his pious admonitions, indulged themselves in every sensual gratification, till the flood came, and swept them away, what wonder, if, in a corrupt and selfish age, those who thrive by the distresses of the public, disregard every warning, and are the last to see, so as to apply any effectual remedy to the mischiefs which impend over their country?

We sometimes have been told by those whom the assertion least of all became, I

mean by themselves, that the christian priesthood are a singularly learned body of men: if this be really the case, there is no pursuit in which they can apply such acquired knowledge more beneficially to the respective communities in which they live, than by attempting to remove those narrow prejudices, which too often descend like an inheritance, and by inculcating the great doctrine of universal love: however it may sound, in the ear of a philosopher, like obvious and even trite morality, to remark, that “ God hath
 “ made of one blood all nations of men for
 “ to dwell on the face of the earth, and
 “ hath determined the times before ap-
 “ pointed, and the bounds of their habita-
 “ tion.” These natural sentiments are frequently counteracted, even in the early education of youth, by instilling that contempt of foreign manners and governments, and those overweening notions of the superiority of the land in which our habitation is
 allotted

allotted to us, which are vulgarly miscalled patriotifm, or the love of our country. The real friend to his country is at the fame time infligated by benevolence to all mankind: he, if liftened to, would fix the profperity of his native realm on the ftable bafis of peace, frugality, and induftry; inftead of grasping at its aggrandizement by a fyftem of bribery, extortion, and rapine: neither ought we to look for its betrayers among thofe who have been anxious to import wifdom as precious merchandife, and correct what is univerfally acknowledged to be amifs at home, by a temperate reform; avoiding the errors, and adopting the wholefome inftitutes of other nations. The worft enemies to any country are they who, infidiously working on the evil paffions of the multitude, urge the profufe fquandering of blood and treasure, till thoufands of widows and orphans fhall have to lament the lofs of thofe moft dear to them, flain, far from their homes, in needlefs un-

profitable quarrels; and yet greater numbers reduced from a state of useful labour to utter beggary, shall be found starving in the streets of its depopulated cities.

How many accomplished scholars are to be found in the world, who have not the least idea "what manner of spirit they are of," who apparently forget that the "Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them?" The proud and violent, hurried away by transports of indignation against those whom they perhaps erroneously conceive to be greater sinners than themselves, would, like Elijah, call down fire from heaven to consume them: but surely the Minister who is stationed at the altars of the "Prince of Peace," has been taught a far different lesson.

If christian perfection be found too hard for us to attain, let us recollect how Aaron,
whom

whom the Psalmist calls " the Saint of the
 " Lord," acted at a most awful crisis, when
 " the earth had opened, and swallowed up
 " Dathan, and covered the company of Abi-
 " ram;" and the wrath of the Lord, which
 followed the earthquake, had destroyed above
 fourteen thousand more of the people. How
 consonant to their holy profession will it be
 esteemed, if those who are set apart to the
 immediate service of God, unite their inter-
 position as one man, to put an end to the
 sufferings of their brethren; substituting
 prayers and tears for the censor filled with
 incense. Regardless of any human praise, or
 evil report, looking for no recompence but
 the approbation of God, and their own con-
 sciences, let them come forward in imitation
 of this Jewish High Priest, and take their
 stand " between the dead and the living."
 The successful exertions of this good Shep-
 herd to save the flock placed under his care,
 are admirably illustrated in the book, enti-

tled, "The Wisdom of Solomon," which is
 less read than it deserves, from being placed
 among the Apocryphal writers. "There
 " was a destruction of the multitude in the
 " Wilderness; but the wrath endured not
 " long. For then the blameless man made
 " haste, and stood forth to defend them; and
 " bringing the shield of his proper ministry,
 " even prayer, and the propitiation of in-
 " cense, set himself against the wrath, and
 " so brought the calamity to an end. So he
 " overcame the destroyer, not with strength
 " of body, nor force of arms, but with a
 " word subdued he him that punished, al-
 " ledging the oaths and covenants made with
 " the fathers." If happily the wide-wasting
 pestilence of war can yet be stayed, by their
 earnest and pathetic intercessions both to
 their masters on earth, and that far greater
 master who sitteth in the heavens, ages yet
 unborn may have abundant cause to bless
 the ministers of the gospel.

How

How far the important series of events, which are now occupying the attention of the world, may tend to the production of that great crisis foretold in the Revelation of St. John, the downfall of Babylon, it is by no means incumbent upon me to hazard any conjecture. We see as yet, it must be confessed, no symptoms of that happy state of things spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, and usually interpreted as relating to Christ's kingdom upon earth. But of all the sentiments hazarded on what is far beyond our shallow understandings to fathom, the calculations of those who confidently represent the final judgment of the world as a period still far distant, may justly be reprobated, not only as of no authority, but as extremely pernicious in their tendency. On that, and many other subjects, all rash assertions are totally unbecoming. Among the bad effects imputed by our Saviour himself to the evil servants entertaining a notion that his Lord

would

would delay his coming, the first and principal one mentioned is his beginning "to smite
 " his fellow-servants," on which he assures us, that "the Lord of that servant shall come
 " in a day when he looketh not for him, and
 " in an hour that he is not aware of, and
 " shall cut him asunder, and appoint him
 " his portion with the hypocrites." If these threatenings reach, as undoubtedly they do, even down to those who, in the lowest station, are guilty of any cruel or oppressive conduct, though their powers to disturb the general harmony of the creation are extremely limited; how much rather do they include those who have both the abilities and inclination to operate extensive mischiefs! Let the proud oppressors of mankind, against whom the blood of thousands cries to heaven for vengeance, read this awful doom, and tremble. It no less behoves those who have on the other hand received some trivial provocation, whether nations, or individuals, of
 their

their own free accord to remit the hundred pence that are due to them, lest their offended master should deliver them over to the tormentors, till they can satisfy his just demand of ten thousand talents.

til here

It remains to offer a few remarks on those stated seasons of penitence, which, it is evident, were among the Jews often converted to the worst purposes; the prophet Isaiah speaks of the manner in which their fasts were solemnised with a more than common degree of indignation: "Behold ye fast for
 " debate and strife, and to smite with the fist
 " of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do
 " this day to make your voice to be heard on
 " high: is it such a fast as I have chosen, a
 " day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to
 " bow down his head like a bulrush?"
 Here we may observe the mere external demonstrations of sorrow without real amendment, considered as an unavailing homage,
 and

and the still grosser abuses of such a solemnity to serve the purposes of arrogance and contention, pronounced to be in the utmost degree hateful to our Maker. The character of censors differs widely from that of penitents; nor does it seem possible for us to spend the season appropriated to humiliation in a manner less devout than by expatiating on the wickedness of those with whom we are at variance; thus acted the proud Pharisee when he went up to the temple to pray, pointing out to the great Searcher of all Hearts, the publican who appears to have stood near him, as a sinner, and extolling, by the comparison, his own superior righteousness; but we find the result was, that he went down to his house less justified than that publican, against whom he had been so bitterly inveighing; for, "every one that exalteth himself shall be abased."

The really good are far more cautious and moderate

moderate in their language. St. Jude recommends the government of the tongue, more forcibly than any precept could have done, in the striking contrast which he sets before his readers. "Filthy dreamers speak
 "evil of the things they know not: yet Michael the archangel, when, contending with
 "the devil, he disputed about the body of
 "Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation."

Gross intemperance of words acquires greater guilt, in proportion as it is premeditated and persevered in; we ought to revere ourselves so much as to curb even our very thoughts, and restrain our outward gestures from exhibiting any unseemly indications of rage, even when no human witnesses are present. It being our duty to "honor all
 "men," we are indisputably bound to beware of giving unnecessary offence even to the meanest, by the harsh or overbearing
 manner

manner in which we express ourselves ; if reason fail in persuading us to observe this conduct at all times, the behaviour even of the most petulant, under some circumstances, shews us how easy it were. Our own timid apprehensions have more authority over us than any arguments ; while we treat our inferiors, or those who are at a sufficient distance from us, with contumely, and are prone to litigiousness in the presence of our equals, we naturally approach those who are considerably superior to us, with mild language and the most respectful demeanor.

The inspired authors of the Old Testament, in a variety of passages, use the phrase, " Lord of Hosts," to denote the supreme creator of the universe ; the signification appears so obvious, that it must be inferred that none but such as are wilfully blind can possibly misunderstand it ; the idea which it conveys to us, being only this ; that " the battle is
 " not

“not to the strong;” but that victory in war, equally with success in every other undertaking, depends solely on the will of the Most High; but from the language now held, it seems as if too many, and among them those from whom better things might be expected, construed, “Lord of Hosts,” to mean a God whose wrath, like that of Hesus worshipped by the ancient Gauls, could only be appeased by hecatombs of human sacrifices.

A few only of those numerous evils which are inseparable from war, are to be sought for upon the field of battle, among the heaps who lie slain, or disabled by their wounds: all property is thrown into confusion; the din of arms utterly silencing the voice of the laws; the enemy plunder on one side, and on the other, the wretched inhabitants too frequently suffer equal outrages from the soldiery called in for their protection; the dearth

dearth of provisions instigating friends, as well as foes, to supply their necessities by violence ; the husbandman, torn away from the plough, is compelled to assist in laying waste the fields which he has been tilling for the subsistence of his family, or to fire the barns and storehouses in which their food was deposited. Infectious disease accompanied by famine stalks through the land. To the fertile plains of Poland having been recently converted into a wide desert, may be ascribed some portion of the distress which at this moment affects the remotest corners of Europe ; holding forth a terrible instance of those extensive mischiefs which attend the foul conspiracies of barbarian despots.

In proportion as the idea of its being meritorious to hate those who are considered as enemies to religion, diffuses its baleful influence among the unlettered laity, it becomes more necessary for their spiritual
pastors

pastors frequently and earnestly to remind them, that in every possible instance of this nature, vengeance belongs to God only, and is not by him entrusted to any human vicergerent.

That an intolerant and persecuting spirit, little short of that which actuated the crusaders, has again broken forth with much violence in this island, it is impossible to doubt. We most of us have seen with our own eyes this metropolis, in various parts of it, defaced by the blazing fragments of houses inhabited by Roman Catholics, consigned to destruction through a zeal for the Protestant cause; and yet more recently, in one of our most crowded provincial towns, has the furious hand of fanatical orthodoxy been raised in a similar manner against Presbyterians; nor, in either instance, were those deeds of darkness confined to the secrecy of a few, or attempted to be veiled by the shades of night. These abominations, on reading which, posterity

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will

will have to blush for their ancestors, were openly perpetrated at noon day, in the presence of immense numbers, who either secretly connived at them, or were too much intimidated to venture upon making any effectual resistance.

If the same evil spirit still ferment in our bosoms ; if we proceed irretrievably to embroil ourselves with those whom we pretend to look upon as Atheists, greater evils than any which have been already mentioned, may yet await us ; in days of yore, the infidel Mahometan emperor displayed to heaven, on the point of his lance, the scroll which contained a violated league, and obtained a decisive victory over the Christians. The best, and indeed the only, means of promoting the essential interests of religion, are, by the soundness of our doctrines, and the purity of our lives, each for himself in his own individual capacity ; the same may be asserted in regard to the most flourishing empires;

empires; for, as the Psalmist judiciously observes, "there is no king saved by the multitude of an host, a mighty man is not delivered by much strength."

Still less reliance is to be placed on meeting with effectual succour, in the hour of distress, from other nations, by whatsoever ties they may be attached to us, especially if their alliance is either purchased with gold, or obtained by menaces. One part of Rebshakeh's speech, when he summoned Jerusalem to surrender to the arms of Sennacherib, is founded on irrefragable reason, and appears to have been completely sanctioned by the event: "Now behold thou trustest upon
 "the staff of this bruised reed, even upon
 "Egypt, on which if a man lean it will go
 "into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh
 "king of Egypt unto all that trust on him."

For in the sequel to these transactions, we hear no more of Pharaoh than of the demolished idols of Hamath and Arpad. The

great

great error of the Assyrian monarch consisted in his reproaching and blaspheming the holy One of Israel ; on the other hand, Hezekiah, and his subjects, owed their preservation from imminent ruin, not to the horses and chariots of Egypt, but to their own piety, and the benignant interposition of a Divine Providence.

To conclude, the clerical order, to whom I have in this discourse more immediately addressed myself, seldom disposed to pass over in silence what manifestly tends to the honor of their profession, have, no doubt, already anticipated the observation I was going to make, by recollecting that there was found, even at Ahab's council-board, in Michaiah the son of Imlah, one virtuous upright prophet, who attached himself to the interests of humanity.

THE END.